

**MAYOR'S COMMITTEE ON INTEGRITY AND TRUST
IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**TOWN HALL MEETING
ST. PHILIP'S COLLEGE
JANUARY 7, 2003 7:00 P.M.**

Committee Members Presiding:

Dr. Morris Stribling, (Chair); Bob Ross; Diane Cortez; Dr. Richard Gambitta; Reverend Kenneth Allen; and Dr. Ana "Cha" Guzman.

Meeting Convened:

On January 7, 2003 at 7:07 P.M., Dr. Morris Stribling convened the Town Hall Meeting of the Mayor's Committee on Integrity and Trust in Local Government at St. Philip's College. Dr. Stribling gave opening comments to the assembly, explaining the work of the Committee and the procedures for the meeting.

Dr. Stribling introduced Reverend Kenneth Allen and asked that he begin the meeting with an opening prayer.

Dr. Stribling introduced the members of the Committee present. He further explained that the Committee had divided itself into four research teams made up of the following members:

The Ethics Code Review Subcommittee: Members are General William McBride, Auxiliary Bishop Patrick Zurek and Dianne Cortez.

The Discretionary Contracts and Zoning Subcommittee: Members are Dr. Tessa Martinez Pollack, former councilman Bob Ross, Carlos Montemayor and Deanna Frisk.

The Campaign Finance Subcommittee: Members of this group are Dr. Charles Cotrell, Dr. Richard Gambitta, Dr. Morris Stribling and Wayne Alexander.

The Charter Education Subcommittee: Members of this group are Dr. Ana "Cha" Guzman, Rev. Kenneth Allen and Rev. Charles Johnson.

Dr. Stribling stated that speakers would be called in the order that they had signed up on the sign up sheet and that each speaker would be allowed to speak a maximum of 5 minutes. He noted that the Committee would not be able to address or resolve individual complaints or grievances with the City or City personnel.

Dr. Stribling stated that after the four public meetings, the Committee would begin its work on its report to Mayor Edward D. Garza setting out its recommendations by January 31, 2003.

Speakers

List of Speakers: Attachment 1.

1) Kenny Wilson: Mr. Wilson is with the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Wilson read a prepared statement of recommendations to the Chamber's Executive Committee and Board of Directors. (Attachment 2)

2) William B. Johnson: Mr. Johnson is a citizen of San Antonio. He wanted to express his concerns regarding the Civil Service Commission and the San Antonio Fire and Police Unions. Mr. Johnson stated there is a conflict of interest when the Unions are quite strong. Unions drive power and strength of politicians and of those in power to say yes or no. He feels that money and time are not working in the citizen's best interest.

3) Helen Dutmer: Ms. Dutmer stated she did believe the Mayor's Committee would correct problems the City is facing. She stated the problem can be solved with one word – honesty. Honesty - if you have not learned it from when you sat on your mother's lap at home – you are not going to learn it when you're an adult. She does not want to abuse children and does not believe in abusing children, but she feels you get a child's attention by spanking them. You don't beat them you just get their attention. She does not believe you will cure a lot by taking the dollar bill out of politics. Ms. Dutmer stated there should be a limit on how much it costs to run a campaign. Council should not punish the recipient instead they should abolish the firm or business involved from allowing them to do business at City Hall.

4) Charles English: Mr. English stated Dr. Stribling should recuse himself from the Mayor's Committee. Mr. English did not contribute any comments relating to the meeting.

5) Kat Swift: Ms Swift is with the Clean Money San Antonio Organization. Ms. Swift read a prepared report on the Organization's proposals for the City of San Antonio. (Attachment 3)

6) Ruben Espronceda: Mr. Espronceda stated that in 1952 the City changed government in San Antonio as we now know it. At that time it was decided to pay council members \$20. Mr. Espronceda stated it is now time for change – time to pay the Council people. He stated that the City of Austin pays their council members and Mayor. Austin also put into effect a change of government on campaign forum. He stated there was a need to see what other governments are doing outside of San Antonio – take a look at Austin's government. He felt the job is not being done right. He further stated a need to equal the playing field for everyone and give everyone the opportunity to run. Mr. Espronceda then referred to an incident that occurred last year when a person brought forth charges against a council member and did not have enough evidence that the councilman did not live in the district. The Council charged the man with a \$500 fine and the councilman is still sitting on the Council. He stated he owns a newspaper that

had written an article on a councilperson. The council member complained to City officials and shortly thereafter his contract was withdrawn with the City. He stated he asked questions they did not like. We need to have change now – we can't wait 4 or 5 years. Mr. Espronceda also provided committee members a printed document for their review. (Attachment 4)

7) Dolores Zamarron: Is a single parent with six children. She stated she raised her children to be proud of their heritage. All her children graduated from Memorial High School. All of her children do not vote because they feel it's useless. Her oldest child is 30 and her youngest is 22. Her second oldest daughter is 29 and has a disability. They go vote and she tries to explain who she should vote for. Ms. Zamarron feels contributions should be cut. She stated Henry B. Gonzalez did not post campaign propaganda everywhere like today's politicians. She further stated his actions spoke for him. She stated the notice regarding these meetings needed to more informative and specific as to where they were being held. Ms. Zamarron also stated that anything that has to do with money from citizens to citizens should be open record.

8) Don Holding: Mr. Holding is with Eagle Construction Company. He spoke on environmental issues with the towing contract. He stated the current towing contract had been in place for approximately 7 to 9 years with the same towing company. He does not understand why a towing contract is combined with an environmental contract. He further stated that one of the requirements of the contract is to have training on mass destruction. He felt that only a few people in the City had this training – certain City employees. Mr. Holding stated that when the contract is put out to bid only a few people will qualify because of the strict requirements.

9) Keith Lyons: Mr. Lyons is with the Citizens For Ethical Government Organization. He provided Committee members with a printed copy of recommendations. (Attachment #5) His recommendations dealt with full disclosure, 2) campaign contribution limits; 3) bans on contract awards to campaign contributors; 4) clean money elections and 5) independent enforcement body.